



Labour Market Bulletin

Alberta

September 2022



This Labour Market Bulletin provides an analysis of Labour Force Survey results for the province of Alberta, including the regions of Calgary, Edmonton, Central Alberta and Mountain Parks, Southern Alberta, and Northern Alberta.

OVERVIEW

The first half of 2022 in Alberta has been characterized by rapid economic growth, fueled by record high energy prices and oil production. While global energy prices have begun to moderate during the third quarter, employment in the province has remained steady.

However, Alberta is dealing with acute labour shortages in key sectors. There were over 100,000 vacant positions across the province in the second quarter of 2022.¹ Since the pandemic, the hospitality industry has been struggling to recruit an adequate workforce into the sector. In August, the Alberta Hospitality Association estimated that 80 percent of the provinces' hospitality industry was facing staff shortages, as many workers left the sector during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Calgary Hotel Association estimates there are about 700 vacant positions that have remained unfilled since late spring 2022.² In September, the City of Calgary was actively recruiting for its aquatic programs and began retraining and re-certifying lifeguards to deal with ongoing staff shortages.³ The construction sector is also facing acute labour shortages across the province. In mid-July, construction associations across Alberta launched a pilot program to try and deal with persistent staff shortages in rural areas. The program facilitates sharing workers between contractors to provide more consistent hours.⁴

Persistent labour shortages in the health care sector continued to disrupt services across the province through the third quarter. In July, health care centres in the Lakeland region experienced service disruptions caused by staff shortages. Some acute care beds were temporarily unavailable in St. Paul and Lac La Biche, and the obstetrics unit in Lac La Biche closed indefinitely.⁵ In August, the Fort Saskatchewan Community Hospital temporarily closed its obstetrics unit due to a lack of physician coverage.⁶ The Peace River Community Health Centre dealt with persistent staff shortages that forced Alberta Health Services (AHS) to extend the temporary closure of 10 out of the 30 acute care inpatient beds for much of August.⁷ In response to ongoing staff shortages across the province, the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta (CPSA) has launched a five-year pilot project to evaluate means to streamline the assessment and recruitment of internationally trained medical

graduates (IMGs). The project aims to reduce the time it takes for IMGs to meet the requirements for licensure and begin practising in communities that urgently need them.⁸

Employment in the third quarter of 2022 averaged 2.3 million, representing a quarterly increase of 10,100 jobs (+0.4%) compared to the second quarter of 2022. On an annual basis, employment has grown significantly, adding 114,800 jobs (+5.1%) compared to the third quarter of 2021. Compared to last quarter, full-time employment increased by 13,500 jobs (+0.7%), whereas part-time employment decreased by 3,400 jobs (-0.8%).

Alberta Quarterly Labour Force Statistics

Seasonally adjusted data	3rd Quarter 2022	2nd Quarter 2022	3rd Quarter 2021	Quarterly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
Population 15 + ('000)	3,627.4	3,601.3	3,545.5	26.1	0.7	81.9	2.3
Labour Force ('000)	2,497.9	2,490.8	2,453.4	7.1	0.3	44.5	1.8
Employment ('000)	2,367.3	2,357.2	2,252.5	10.1	0.4	114.8	5.1
Full-Time ('000)	1,932.0	1,918.5	1,820.0	13.5	0.7	112.0	6.2
Part-Time ('000)	435.3	438.7	432.5	-3.4	-0.8	2.8	0.6
Unemployment ('000)	130.5	133.6	200.9	-3.1	-2.3	-70.4	-35.0
Unemployment Rate (%)	5.2	5.4	8.2	-0.2	-	-3.0	-
Participation Rate (%)	68.9	69.2	69.2	-0.3	-	-0.3	-
Employment Rate (%)	65.3	65.5	63.5	-0.2	-	1.8	-

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – Table 14-10-0287, formerly CANSIM 282-0087



The unemployment rate decreased by 0.2 percentage points from last quarter to end up at 5.2% in the third quarter of 2022. On an annual basis, the unemployment rate dropped by 3 percentage points compared to the third quarter of 2021. This is the lowest quarterly unemployment rate recorded in Alberta since the beginning of the pandemic. The labour market in Alberta is currently very tight, with many unfilled job vacancies throughout the province.



Young women (aged 15-24 years) had the most significant decline in unemployment rate (1.6 percentage points) between the second and third quarter. The unemployment rate for young men (15 to 24 years) increased by 0.9 percentage points to end up at 11.4% in the third quarter of 2022. The unemployment rate for young workers (15-24 years) is at 10.2% in the third quarter of 2022, compared to 4.4% for workers aged 25 years and over.

Alberta Quarterly Unemployment Rates, by Gender and Age

Seasonally adjusted data	3rd Quarter 2022 (%)	2nd Quarter 2022 (%)	3rd Quarter 2021 (%)	Quarterly Variation (% points)	Yearly Variation (% points)
Total	5.2	5.4	8.2	-0.2	-3.0
25 years and over	4.4	4.5	7.4	-0.1	-3.0
Men - 25 years and over	4.2	4.8	7.2	-0.6	-3.0
Women - 25 years and over	4.6	4.2	7.6	0.4	-3.0
15 to 24 years	10.2	10.6	13.6	-0.4	-3.4
Men - 15 to 24 years	11.4	10.5	16.9	0.9	-5.5
Women - 15 to 24 years	9.1	10.7	10.0	-1.6	-0.9

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – Table 14-10-0287, formerly CANSIM 282-0087

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

Employment in the services-producing sector increased by 6,200 (+0.3%) in the third quarter compared to the previous quarter. In the goods-producing sector, employment was up by 3,800 jobs (+0.7%) in the third quarter of 2022. On an annual basis, employment increased in the services-producing sector by a substantial 98,700 jobs (+5.8%), and by 16,000 jobs (+3.0%) in the goods-producing sector. The larger overall gain in the services

producing sector is due to the disproportionate effects that pandemic restrictions had on those industries in the last couple of years.

Alberta Quarterly Labour Force Statistics, by Industry

Seasonally adjusted data ('000)	3rd Quarter 2022	2nd Quarter 2022	3rd Quarter 2021	Quarterly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
Total employed, all industries	2,367.3	2,357.2	2,252.5	10.1	0.4	114.8	5.1
Goods-producing sector	555.3	551.5	539.3	3.8	0.7	16.0	3.0
Agriculture	40.7	35.9	34.9	4.8	13.4	5.8	16.6
Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas	142.9	145.7	146.4	-2.8	-1.9	-3.5	-2.4
Utilities	22.2	19.4	18.5	2.8	14.4	3.7	20.0
Construction	226.5	227.2	217.4	-0.7	-0.3	9.1	4.2
Manufacturing	122.9	123.3	122.1	-0.4	-0.3	0.8	0.7
Services-producing sector	1,811.9	1,805.7	1,713.2	6.2	0.3	98.7	5.8
Trade	372.0	383.7	334.4	-11.7	-3.0	37.6	11.2
Transportation and warehousing	133.9	130.8	133.7	3.1	2.4	0.2	0.1
Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing	121.2	118.1	121.0	3.1	2.6	0.2	0.2
Professional, scientific and technical services	214.0	202.7	189.4	11.3	5.6	24.6	13.0
Business, building and other support services	72.2	75.1	70.0	-2.9	-3.9	2.2	3.1
Educational services	159.1	165.4	172.8	-6.3	-3.8	-13.7	-7.9
Health care and social assistance	311.1	313.8	294.7	-2.7	-0.9	16.4	5.6
Information, culture and recreation	80.6	77.9	68.6	2.7	3.5	12.0	17.5
Accommodation and food services	135.0	137.2	128.0	-2.2	-1.6	7.0	5.5
Other services	103.9	94.7	97.1	9.2	9.7	6.8	7.0
Public administration	108.9	106.0	103.4	2.9	2.7	5.5	5.3

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – Table T14-10-0355, formerly CANSIM 282-0088

Goods-producing industries

Despite increased demand, high energy prices and record levels of oil production, employment in the **resource extraction sector (forestry, mining, and oil and gas)** decreased on an annual basis. Employment in the sector also decreased by 2,800 jobs (-1.9%) compared to the previous quarter. It is important to note that oil prices have begun to decline during the third quarter after reaching historic highs earlier this year on the heels of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The oil and gas sector is also struggling to recruit and retain employees, especially entry level field service workers, across the province. The surge in energy demand along with relatively high oil prices have driven up the need for an expanded workforce across the sector.⁹ Nevertheless, despite the reduction in employment, other indicators show some strength in the sector. Oil production in Alberta was 18.8 million cubic metres in August 2022, up 5.9% compared to July 2021. Non-conventional (or oil sands) production, which constituted 84.7% of all oil production in Alberta in August 2022, increased by 4.9% year-over-year, while production of conventional oil increased by 11.5%.¹⁰

Employment in **the construction** sector essentially stayed the same in the third quarter compared to the previous quarter. On an annual basis, employment in **construction** increased by 9,100 jobs (4.2%) in the third quarter of 2022 compared to the third quarter of 2021. The sector is also facing acute labour shortages that are affecting the completion dates of projects. For instance, Calgary continues to see strong demand for employees across a range of trades, although fully qualified workers and apprentices are in short supply. The Calgary Construction

Association is working with the province to address the issue, and the province has made it a priority in its Jobs Now and Alberta at Work programs.¹¹ The shortages are especially acute in the rural areas of the province. To address this issue, the Medicine Hat, Grande Prairie, and Alberta construction associations launched a pilot project in July which facilitates sharing workers between contractors to provide more consistent hours.¹² While there are currently many vacancies in the construction sector in Alberta, emerging industries could also extend the problem into the medium term. As an example, the Pathways Alliance, a coalition of oil sands companies, expects its \$12B planned carbon capture and storage projects to strain Alberta's labour force. The construction phase is expected to require tens of thousands of workers between 2025 and 2030.¹³

Services-producing industries

The services-producing sector includes labour intensive and public-facing industries such as wholesale and retail trade, and food and accommodation services. These industries were initially among the most impacted during the height of COVID-19 related closures. In recent months employment has begun to recover.

Employment in the **professional, scientific and technical services** increased by 11,300 jobs (+5.6%) in the third quarter compared to the previous quarter. On an annual basis, the sub-sector's employment was up by 24,600 jobs (+13%). Efforts to decarbonize the economy and accelerate the transition towards renewable energy sources has expanded job growth in the sector. Alberta is investing heavily into carbon capture, utilisation, and storage (CCUS) as a strategy to lower emissions associated with the oil and gas sector. In September 2022, DMG events (Canada) Inc. hosted Carbon Capture Canada, Canada's only carbon capture, utilization, and storage (CCUS) convention, at the Edmonton Convention Centre. The event featured more than 100 exhibitors, 3,000 domestic and international attendees, and a conference with over 100 speakers and 500 delegates.¹⁴ Continued expansion of CCUS should help support job growth in this sector in the short to medium term.

Employment in the **health care and social assistance** sector decreased by 2,700 jobs (-0.9%). It is a discouraging sign for a sector that has been grappling with critical staff shortages in many different regions of Alberta. In July, Alberta Health Services (AHS) paused obstetrical services at the Whitecourt Healthcare Centre for a fourth consecutive month due to the limited availability of obstetrics-trained physicians.¹⁵ That same month, Ambulance services in Edmonton were under stress, increasingly unable to respond to 911 calls due to lack of available paramedics.¹⁶ There were periodic disruptions to various health care services in Sylvan Lake,¹⁷ St. Paul, Lac La Biche,¹⁸ Airdrie,¹⁹ Calgary,²⁰ Medicine Hat,²¹ and many other communities throughout the third quarter. The provincial government has taken steps to help shore up health services throughout the province. In September, AHS announced that it is planning to schedule an additional 1,350 surgeries in the central zone and about 1,250 more procedures in the south zone, by inviting chartered surgical facilities to submit proposals. Moving more orthopedic and general surgeries into chartered facilities should help free up operating room space in hospitals to provide more complex surgeries, says the government.²² Also, Alberta Health has expanded the Rural Education Supplement and Integrated Doctor Experience (RESIDE) program, first announced in January 2022 for 15 communities, to nearly all rural communities. It has also shortened the time commitment to be eligible for financial help. RESIDE is now offering doctors up to \$100,000 for a two-year commitment to a rural practice.²³ Finally, the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta (CPSA) has launched a five-year pilot project to evaluate means to streamline the assessment and recruitment of internationally trained medical graduates

(IMGs). The project aims to reduce the time it takes for IMGs to meet the requirements for licensure and begin practising in communities that urgently need them.²⁴

REGIONAL ANALYSIS

Note: The statistics for the economic regions are not seasonally adjusted and should only be compared on a year-over-year basis. Employment is sometimes influenced by seasonal and calendar effects occurring at the same time and with the same magnitude every year, which can bring about changes in the data that make quarterly comparisons difficult.

In the third quarter of 2022, employment increased on an annual basis in only three of Alberta's seven economic regions – Calgary (+9.4%), Edmonton (+4.0%), and Camrose-**Drumheller** (+5.1%). The largest job losses occurred in Wood **Buffalo - Cold Lake** (-1.8%) and **Red Deer** (-0.9%).

Alberta Quarterly Labour Force Statistics, by Economic Region

Seasonally unadjusted data	Employment			Unemployment Rate		
	3rd Quarter 2022 ('000)	3rd Quarter 2021 ('000)	Yearly Variation (%)	3rd Quarter 2022 (%)	3rd Quarter 2021 (%)	Yearly Variation (% points)
Alberta	2,383.1	2,267.4	5.1	5.4	8.4	-3.0
Economic Regions						
Lethbridge - Medicine Hat	146.4	146.5	-0.1	3.3	5.7	-2.4
Camrose - Drumheller	100.6	95.7	5.1	6.6	9.2	-2.6
Calgary	954.4	872.5	9.4	5.9	9.2	-3.3
Banff-Jasper-Rocky Mountain House and Athabasca-Grand Prairie-Peace River	177.9	178.6	-0.4	5.7	7.1	-1.4
Red Deer	104.6	105.6	-0.9	4.5	9.0	-4.5
Edmonton	828.4	796.3	4.0	5.2	8.3	-3.1
Wood Buffalo - Cold Lake	70.9	72.2	-1.8	6.2	6.1	0.1

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – Table 14-10-0387, formerly CANSIM 282-0122

Employment in the **Lethbridge-Medicine Hat** region remained essentially unchanged on an annual basis in the third quarter of 2022. Like many regions, **Lethbridge-Medicine-Hat** saw disruptions in health care services due to acute labour shortages in the sector. In August, Alberta Precision Laboratories was forced to reduce in-city hematology testing at the Medicine Hat Regional Hospital for at least three months due to staffing shortages.²⁵ In positive news for the region, Alberta Health Services is planning to have 17 new family medicine physicians working in Lethbridge once they have completed their College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta practice readiness assessments. Four of the physicians are expected to start in the fall; the remainder are expected to start practice between December 2022 and March 2023.²⁶ In other initiatives, the Town of Taber has joined the Alberta Advantage Immigration Program, a system that connects immigrants with jobs and business opportunities, with eight businesses already signed up.²⁷

In the **Camrose – Drumheller** region, employment increased by 4,900 jobs (+5.1%). In some good news regarding job creation, CGC Inc., the Canadian division of USG Corporation, is building a \$210M, state-of-the-art wallboard manufacturing plant in Wheatland County. Construction is expected to begin in 2023. The project is expected to

create approximately 200 construction jobs during the site build, and more than 100 long-term manufacturing jobs at the plant.²⁸ Additionally, in September, Claystone Waste Ltd. announced that it is building a \$4M state-of-the-art aerated compost facility in Ryley, slated to be operational in summer 2023. Construction of the facility will create up to 40 jobs with additional permanent positions required for operations.²⁹

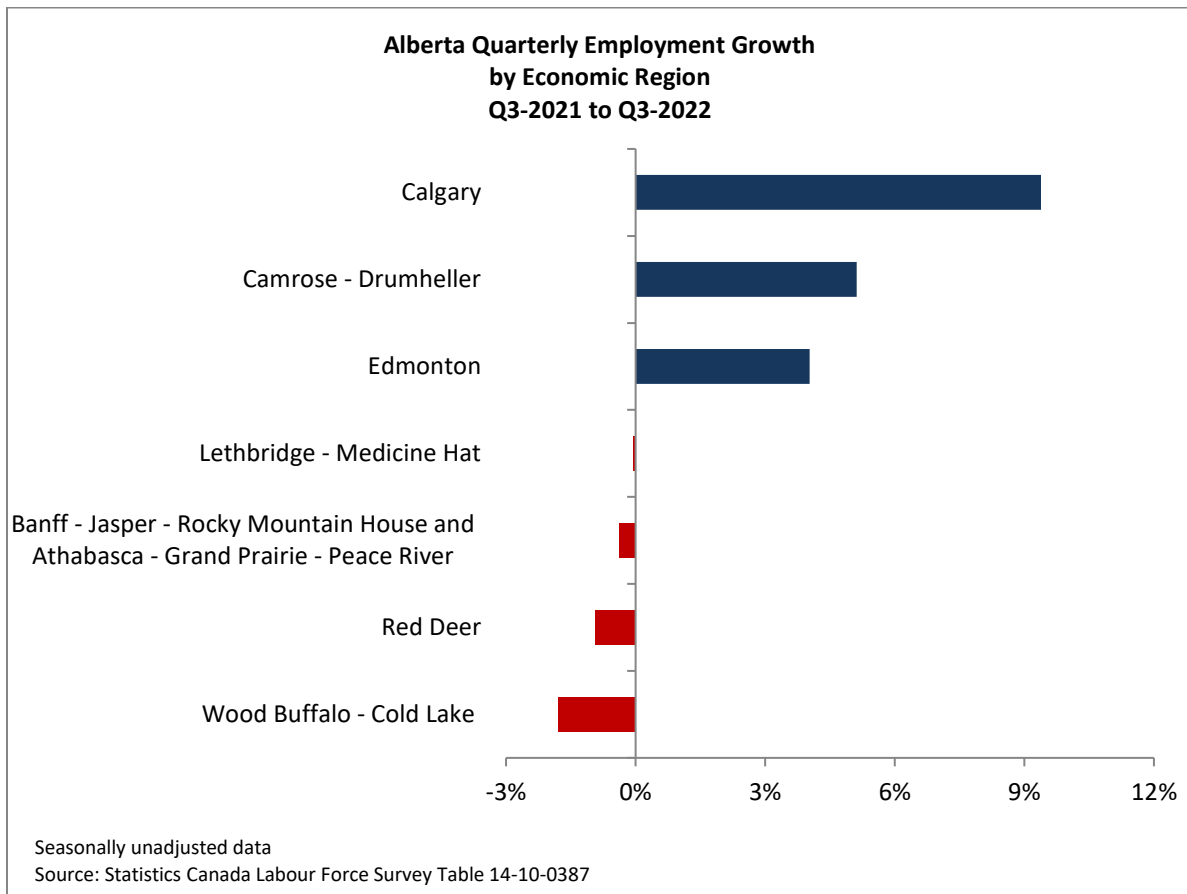
Employment in **Banff – Jasper – Rocky Mountain House** and **Athabasca – Grande Prairie – Peace River** decreased slightly by 700 jobs (-0.4%). There are currently about 5,000 vacant jobs in Banff, Canmore and the surrounding ski hills as local businesses struggle to staff-up in anticipation of the upcoming winter tourist season. Many workers in the area retired, or left the work force during the pandemic, leaving a glut of open jobs that have been difficult to fill.³⁰ Businesses in the region including the Fairmont Jasper Park Lodge are offering financial incentives to attract workers.³¹

In **Red Deer**, employment decreased slightly by 0.9% and the regional unemployment rate stood at 4.5% in the third quarter of 2022. The region has been severely affected by labour shortages in the health care sector. In July, the urgent care centre in Sylvan Lake was forced to temporarily close three times in one week due to a shortage of physicians, and patients were redirected to nearby communities or asked to return once service was restored.³² In September, Alberta Health Services (AHS) enacted temporary closures at the Sylvan Lake Advanced Ambulatory Care Service due to a shortage of nursing staff, after options to secure alternative nursing supports were exhausted.³³ There is also high demand in many other sectors in the region.

Employment in **Wood Buffalo – Cold Lake** decreased by 1,300 jobs (-1.8%) on an annual basis in the third quarter of 2022. Much like many regions in Alberta, the **Wood Buffalo – Cold Lake** is dealing with health care labour shortages. In July, staff shortages forced some acute care beds to be temporarily unavailable in St. Paul and Lac La Biche. Also, the obstetrics unit in Lac La Biche closed indefinitely in July.³⁴ In August, AHS closed the Elk Point Emergency Department over four consecutive nights due to the lack of registered nursing staff and a failure to secure nurses for temporary coverage.³⁵

Employment in the **Calgary** region increased by a provincial high of 81,900 jobs (+9.4%) on an annual basis. Despite the robust job growth, the **Calgary** region has not been immune to staff shortages that have plagued the health care sector across Alberta. In July, the urgent care centre in Airdrie was closed overnight on the weekends for about eight weeks due to a shortage of doctors.³⁶ In August, the South Calgary Health Centre and the Airdrie Community Health Centre both reduced hours of operation due to staff vacation time, burnout, departing staff and continued COVID-19 infections according to AHS.³⁷ On a positive note, Okotoks and Chestermere now have local, 24-hour ambulance coverage, along with four additional paramedics who have been working since August 15, 2022.³⁸

In **Edmonton**, employment was up by 32,100 jobs (+4.0) compared to a year ago. Again, like the rest of the province, the **Edmonton** region also grappled with staff shortages that affected health care services. In July, ambulance services in Edmonton were under stress, increasingly unable to respond to 911 calls due to lack of available paramedics. This was despite the fact that in June nine new ambulances were added province wide with a further eleven expected by end of September.³⁹ In August, the Fort Saskatchewan Community Hospital announced that it was temporarily closing its obstetrics unit for two weeks starting August 6 due to a lack of physician coverage.⁴⁰



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- ¹ ATB Financial (September 21, 2022) [Job vacancies rose again in the second quarter](#)
 - ² CBC News (August 23, 2022) [Alberta's labour market shifts as pandemic spurs workers to switch careers](#)
 - ³ CBC News (September 13, 2022) [Shortage of staff leaves parents frustrated, kids without lessons at city pools](#)
 - ⁴ Journal of Commerce (July 18, 2022) [Alberta addresses worker shortages with employee loan program](#)
 - ⁵ Lakeland Today (July 20, 2022) [Nursing shortages continue to cause disruptions across Lakeland](#)
 - ⁶ CBC News (August 5, 2022) [Staff shortages cause labour and delivery unit closure at Fort Saskatchewan hospital](#)
 - ⁷ Cold Lake Sun (August 29, 2022) [Continued bed closure at medical centre](#)
 - ⁸ College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta (October 4, 2022) [CPSA announces new pilot project to accelerate registration of internationally-trained physicians](#)
 - ⁹ Edmonton Journal (September 27, 2022) [Help Wanted: Alberta's oil and gas industry struggling for entry-level workers during boom](#)
 - ¹⁰ Government of Alberta (September 30, 2022) [Oil Production](#)
 - ¹¹ Calgary Herald (September 13, 2022) [Calgary construction industry sees job growth despite provincial losses](#)
 - ¹² Journal of Commerce (July 18, 2022) [Alberta addresses worker shortages with employee loan program](#)
 - ¹³ BNN Bloomberg (September 19, 2022) [Oil Sands Carbon-Capture Goals May Strain Alberta Labor Force](#)
 - ¹⁴ Carbon Capture Canada (September 8, 2022) [DMG events to host global carbon capture convention in Edmonton, Canada](#)
 - ¹⁵ The Whitecourt Star (July 8, 2022) [Pause in services for expecting Whitecourt moms going into fourth month](#)
 - ¹⁶ Global News (July 18, 2022) [Frequent code reds, high levels of ambulance strain in Edmonton region: AHS data](#)
 - ¹⁷ Red Deer Advocate (July 20, 2022) [Sylvan Lake's urgent care centre temporarily closed three times this week](#)
 - ¹⁸ Lakeland Today (July 20, 2022) [Nursing shortages continue to cause disruptions across Lakeland](#)
 - ¹⁹ CBC News (July 22, 2022) [Closure of Airdrie urgent care centre affects entire region, says Calgary mayor](#)
 - ²⁰ Calgary Herald (August 3, 2022) [Staff attrition, spiking demand among factors in Calgary urgent care hour reductions](#)
 - ²¹ Medicine Hat News (August 13, 2022) [Hospital staffing shortages resulting in reduction of in-city hematology testing](#)
 - ²² Government of Alberta (September 07, 2022) [Expanding surgery access in central, southern Alberta](#)
 - ²³ Red Deer Advocate (September 9, 2022) [Alberta doctor recruitment program changed to include more communities](#)
 - ²⁴ College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta (October 4, 2022) [CPSA announces new pilot project to accelerate registration of internationally-trained physicians](#)
 - ²⁵ Medicine Hat News (August 13, 2022) [Hospital staffing shortages resulting in reduction of in-city hematology testing](#)
 - ²⁶ Lethbridge News Now (September 15, 2022) [17 new family doctors to begin practicing in Lethbridge](#)
 - ²⁷ CTV News (September 16, 2022) [Taber, Alta. joins program to offer newcomers jobs and a place to live](#)
 - ²⁸ Invest Alberta Corporation (July 28, 2022) [CGC announces \\$210 million investment to build state-of-the-art wallboard manufacturing plant in Alberta](#)
 - ²⁹ Claystone Waste Ltd. (September 20, 2022) [Claystone Waste to become leading organics provider for Alberta municipalities](#)
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- ³⁰ CTV News (September 2, 2022) [Banff businesses hope to hire a few more workers before snow flies](#)
- ³¹ Narcity (August 17, 2022) [Fairmont Hotels In Alberta Are Hiring & You Could Earn \\$500 For Moving To The Rockies](#)
- ³² Red Deer Advocate (July 20, 2022) [Sylvan Lake’s urgent care centre temporarily closed three times this week](#)
- ³³ RDNews Now (September 22, 2022) [Temporary closures of Sylvan Lake Advanced Ambulatory Care Service](#)
- ³⁴ Lakeland Today (July 20, 2022) [Nursing shortages continue to cause disruptions across Lakeland](#)
- ³⁵ My Lakeland Now (August 22, 2022) [Elk Point ER closes for the week](#)
- ³⁶ CBC News (July 22, 2022) [Closure of Airdrie urgent care centre affects entire region, says Calgary mayor](#)
- ³⁷ Calgary Herald (August 3, 2022) [Staff attrition, spiking demand among factors in Calgary urgent care hour reductions](#)
- ³⁸ CTV News (August 30, 2022) [Okotoks, Chestermere get boost to EMS services](#)
- ³⁹ Global News (July 18, 2022) [Frequent code reds, high levels of ambulance strain in Edmonton region: AHS data](#)
- ⁴⁰ CBC News (August 5, 2022) Staff [shortages cause labour and delivery unit closure at Fort Saskatchewan hospital](#)